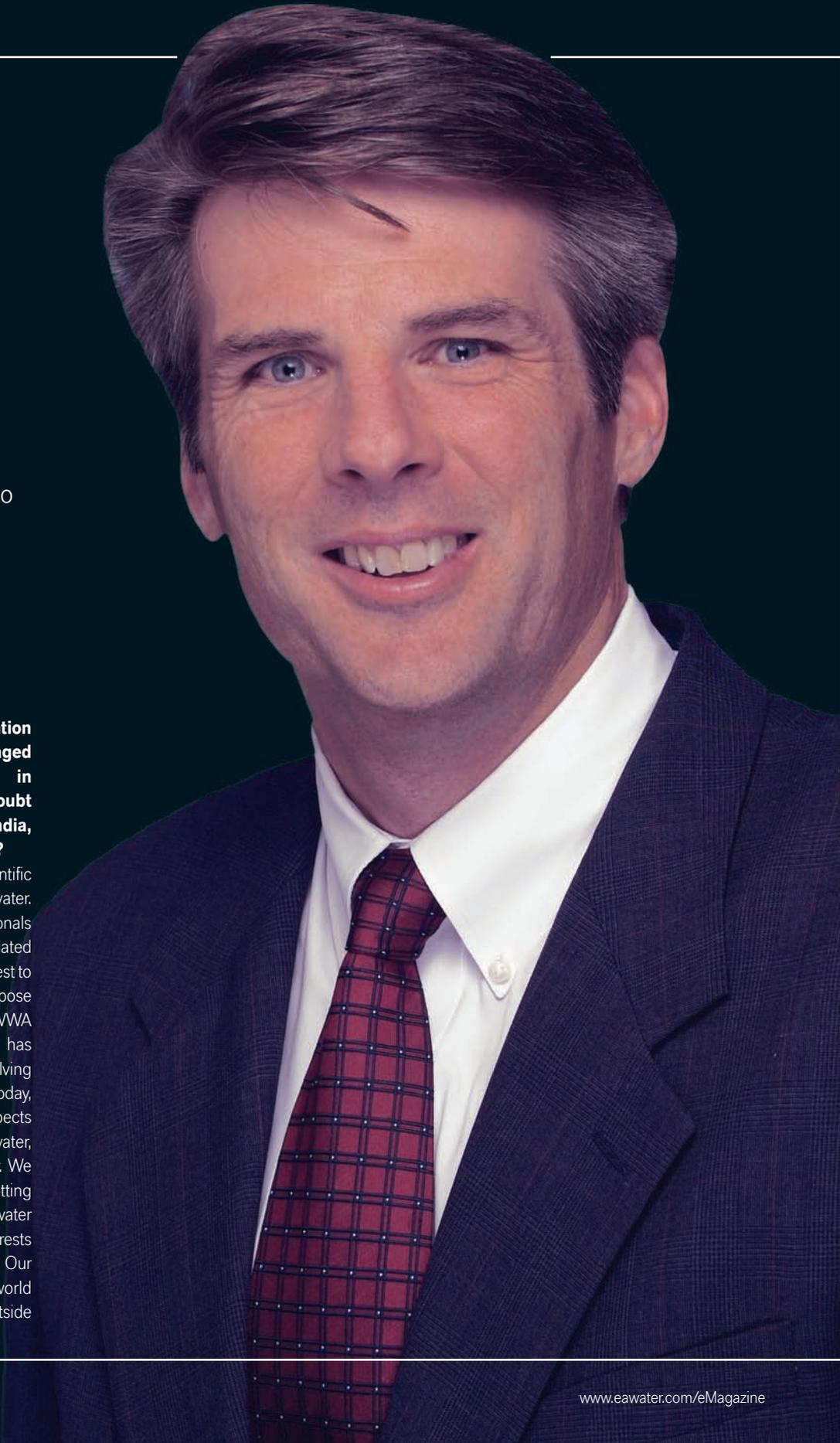


David B. LaFrance,
Chief Executive Officer,
**American Water Works
Association**

David LaFrance has a long history of participation in AWWA, beginning in 1995 when he first became a member and volunteered on the Rates and Charges Committee. He was named CEO in March, 2010. Prior to joining AWWA, David spent 16 years at Denver Water, eventually becoming the Director of Finance.

Q With such a wide reputation for a very active and engaged organization, anybody involved in managing or treating water has no doubt heard of you. But for our readers in India, can you describe what AWWA does?

AWWA is an education and scientific membership association that focuses on water. We create networks of water professionals who work together to solve problems related to the quantity and quality of water, how best to supply it and how best to collect and dispose of it after it has been used. Historically, AWWA has focused on drinking water and it has made considerable contributions to solving water borne disease in North America. Today, AWWA helps its members manage all aspects of the urban water cycle—drinking water, wastewater, reuse water and stormwater. We are known for our manuals of practice, setting industry standards, educating the water workforce, and representing utility interests with governments and policy makers. Our members live in countries around the world and we are pleased that our first office outside of North America is in Mumbai, India.



Q How many members does AWWA currently have from India?

AWWA has approximately 100 members from India, these members are automatically part of both AWWA and AWWAIndia, which is the name of our community of water professionals from India. Our expectations is that the number of members will grow by leaps and bounds over the next years as AWWAIndia joins with others to work on and solve India's water and wastewater challenges.

Q Why was India selected as the first country outside of North America for AWWA to expand? Please tell us about AWWA expansion plans in India. What were the reasons and what are the implications of this decision?

In June 2013, AWWA revised its strategic vision to "A better world through better water." And while we had always worked with water professionals from around the globe we never had an office outside of North America. Knowing that our ability to help water professional with their jobs and challenges increases when we are located in the community where the work is done we evaluated several countries with whom we have had strong existing relationship. India was quickly placed at the top of the list for our first office outside of North America. We have a strong membership core in India with some of the best water professionals.

The implications in the near-term include establishing the office and increasing awareness with water professionals and key stakeholders about our decision. And while we know much about India's water challenges we know there is still a lot to learn. In the long-term AWWAIndia and its members hope to make a better India through better water for everyone who lives and works in India.

Q Have you studied the Indian Water Industry? What are your impressions?

We have studied the Indian water industry. As is the case in all places, water which seems so simple, is actually very complicated with many stakeholders needing it. In many ways much of India's water systems remind me of

those in the US, before the development of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act. Those two US Federal Acts, which were passed in the early 1970s, assure those in the US that tap water is safe to drink and that when wastewater is returned to the environment it will be clean, which in turn helps protect the environment. These are important results for any country that wants a growing economy, healthy population, and sustainable natural resources. There are other factors that are important as well, such as the lack of 24/7 water and the large amount of unaccounted for water. All of India's water challenges can be solved in time with a commitment toward public health, protecting the environment, and a lot of dedicated hard work by water professionals and government officials.

Q Which initiative will AWWA India take in India initially? And where do you see your challenges?

We are certainly thinking big but we know we need to start small and then scale fast. We will lead a half-day seminar at the IWWA Conference this January where we will discuss two important items. The first is what makes a sustainable water and wastewater utility and the second is how the US trains its operators to make them Professional Operators. We are also talking with utilities, consultants, end-users, government leaders and others about certificate training programs as well.

Q The need to address aging water and wastewater infrastructure has been the focus of AWWA. How can your experience help manage the aging and deteriorating public water supply and treatment infrastructure in India?

Aging water and wastewater infrastructure challenges are top of mind for water professionals in many countries including the US and India. AWWA has lead landmark studies that first quantified the magnitude of America's water infrastructure problem and the staggering cost implications. Then we equipped our members with a computerized analytical tool that would allow them measure their local impacts and needs. As a final step we successfully had a Federal law passed that, once funded, will provide low cost funding for

water and wastewater infrastructure projects.

Q Tell us about "The Water Equation" initiative of AWWA. Can it help the Indian water industry as well?

The Water Equation is also a new initiative for AWWA. The name comes from the idea that equations are things that you solve, just like water challenges - we solve them. The water equation and the problems we are trying to solve include assuring a prepared, skilled and educated water sector workforce. To help with that AWWA has many educational scholarships as well as a young professionals program. The Water Equation also includes a program that we created with partners called Community Engineering Corps which helps small communities in the US to gain access to technical support for water and infrastructure challenges that they cannot solve by themselves. And The Water Equation also helps AWWA find grant funds for training and capacity building. It is this last category, grant funding, which will have the most immediate impact for Indian water professionals as it will help us as we launch AWWA India. www.awwaindia.com

Q Will you be collaborating with Indian Government, municipal bodies and other such organizations?

This is a critical part of our plans. A partnership with the Indian Government and municipal entities is required for success. We have already met with many of them and we look forward to meeting others. Another critical partner for AWWAIndia is the Indian Water Works Association. We are excited to continue or historical partnership with IWWA. India's sustainable and livable city goals are a call to action for all water professionals and to achieve them a partnership with water policy and government leaders is a must.

Q Finally, who should join AWWA India? And why?

The simplest answer is that anyone who is in the water business should join AWWAIndia. We typically have members who work for utilities (both municipal and privately owned), consulting firms, manufactures of products and equipment, universities, laboratories, and government agencies.